

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: June 13, 2003

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-105)

TO: Chris Furey, KEWR-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Water Entity (Washington Water Trust 2003)

Project No: 2002-013-00

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement

Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 4.18: Purchase /
Negotiate Water Right; 4.19: File for Instream Water Right

Location: Twisp, Okanogan County, Washington

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the National Fish and Wildlife
Foundation, implemented by the Washington Water Trust

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund several water rights acquisition projects proposed by the Washington Water Trust (WWT). The funding will be administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the entity administering the Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program, initiated under RPA 151 of the National Marine Fisheries Service's 2000 Biological Opinion on the Operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System. The water rights acquired by the WWT will be left instream to increase flow and improve water quality. Increasing instream flow of water-limited streams benefits fish listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The three projects proposed by the WWT include: renewing a lease for 0.43 cubic feet per second (cfs) in the Methow River for three years; renewing a lease of 1.29 cfs to be protected in a 0.75 mile stretch of Gold Creek, a tributary to the Methow River, for one year; and renewing a lease of 0.17 cfs in a 0.2 mi stretch of Frazer Creek, a tributary of the Methow River, for two years.

Analysis: The compliance checklists for these projects were completed by Peter Dykstra and Lisa Pelly, WWT, and meet the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The proposed projects are located in the Methow River and tributaries in north-central Washington. The transactions are all renewals of existing short-term water rights leases. The WWT program benefits listed fish species by perpetuating the short-term leases, though none of the proposed transactions are permanent. By funding the current transactions, BPA will

temporarily protect against the risk that the water rights will again be used consumptively. Because the proposed transactions will maintain the status quo, BPA has made a determination that the proposed projects will have no effect on fish and wildlife species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

No other environmental review or consultation is required as part of the proposed projects, because there is no ground disturbance or construction associated with the proposal. The WWT has a program for public involvement, including holding public meetings and using the local media to provide information and solicit comments. The WWT has printed announcements about the proposed projects in the local paper in March 2003, and the proposals were the subject of an article in the local paper. WWT has also coordinated with several regulating agencies that have their own public notice requirements, such as the Washington Department of Ecology.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program, as well as BPA's Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD. This Supplement Analysis finds that: 1) implementing the proposed action will not result in any substantial changes to the Watershed Management Program that are relevant to environmental concerns; and 2) there are no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the Watershed Management Program or its impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Richard Yarde
Richard Yarde
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ James M. Kehoe for
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 6/16/03

Attachments:
3 Environmental Checklists

cc: (w/o attachments)
Ms. Lisa Pelly and Mr. Peter Dykstra, Washington Water Trust, 810 Third Avenue, Suite 120, Seattle, WA 98104
Mr. Andrew Purkey, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 806 SW Broadway, Suite 750 Portland, Oregon 97205